



# ILLINOISANS RELY UPON ACCURATE CENSUS DATA

A NALEO CAMPAIGN

**ACCURATE CENSUS DATA ARE KEY** for federal funding allocations to state and localities. Federal resources are divided up between jurisdictions according to what Census data tell us about various communities' demographic characteristics, needs, and assets. In order for Illinois to receive its fair share, the Census Bureau must master the difficult task of accurately counting the state's dynamic, diverse population.

Historically, certain hard-to-reach populations are more difficult to count than others. Illinois is home to disproportionate shares of populations that are most frequently undercounted, including African Americans and individuals who are not yet fully fluent in English. Between 2010 and 2015, the state outpaced the nation in terms of both its foreign-born population and the share of its residents who spoke a language other than English in their homes.



## Federal Census-directed programs that are particularly important to Illinoisans include:

### Strengthening Education of Vulnerable Children

One of the most enduring challenges for Illinois's cities is the provision of effective, high-quality education to students with diverse backgrounds and needs. Programs that are part of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) have long been a critical source of funding for academic support and supplemental learning activities that help vulnerable Illinois children thrive and succeed. In FY16, for example, Illinois school districts received more than \$682 million in funding under Title I of the ESEA.

### Rural Housing Assistance

There are thousands of small towns and cities across Illinois whose residents earn less on average than their urban counterparts, particularly in rural areas located at a distance from Chicago, East St. Louis, and other population centers in the state. Thanks to Census data concerning these communities, in FY16 Illinois received \$309 million of the federal funding allocated to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Single Family Housing Direct Home Loan and Guaranteed Loan Programs, which help low- and moderate-income families in rural areas obtain and maintain decent housing.

### Safe Water and Waste Disposal

Illinois's rural communities also receive very significant support through USDA's Water and Waste Disposal Loan and Grant Programs, which help areas with smaller populations develop reliable clean water production and sewage systems. In FY16, Census data put Illinois among the top ten states in the nation in terms of receipt of Water and Waste Disposal funding, with more than \$73 million allocated to the state.

**When it is adequately funded, the Census Bureau produces highly accurate, detailed data that enable us to direct a total of over \$34 billion to the Illinoisan communities where those resources are most needed.**

But if the Census Bureau's hands are tied by declining appropriations or limitations that prevent it from conducting a sound decennial enumeration and accurate surveys, the quality of Census data similarly will decline, and many fewer Illinoisans will benefit from these and many other Census-directed federal programs.

Congress must adequately fund the Census Bureau by providing it with no less than \$8 billion for the decennial Census in FY20. It is critical that Congress secure this funding by the start of the fiscal year, when address canvassing, advertising, and other key activities will already be underway. Any funding delay or uncertainty would disrupt the conduct of the survey and imperil the accuracy of Census data for a decade to come.